In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-5, 15, 17 and 19, without prejudice, as follows:

1-5.   (Canceled)

6.   (Original)   A license issuance server for issuing a license for execution of software, comprising:

attach/detach key information issuing means, responsive to an attach/detach key information generation request including device identification information fixedly recorded on a recording medium in a processing device which is a target of permission to run the software, for generating attach/detach key information including the device identification information and an attach/detach key-specific encryption key, and recording the generated attach/detach key information on a hardware key which can be attached to and detached from the processing device; and

license issuing means, responsive to a license issue request for the software, for encrypting a software decryption key for decrypting the software which is provided in an encrypted state, by using the attach/detach key-specific encryption key, and outputting license information including the encrypted software decryption key.

7. (Original) The license issuance server according to claim 6, wherein said license issuing means includes, in the license information, a license count indicating a number of devices permitted to simultaneously execute the software.

8. (Original) The license issuance server according to claim 6, wherein said hardware key has tamper resistance.

9. (Original) The license issuance server according to claim 6, wherein said license issuing means encrypts the license information before outputting same.

10. (Original) The license issuance server according to claim 9, wherein said license issuing means encrypts the license information by using the attach/detach key-specific encryption key.

11. (Original) The license issuance server according to claim 6, further comprising license issue charge calculating means for storing past records on the license information output from said license issuing means, and calculating, based on the stored license information, a license issue charge to be billed to a provider of the software.

12. (Original) A software provision server for providing software whose execution is to be restricted by a license, comprising:

attach/detach key information issuing means, responsive to an attach/detach key information generation request including device identification information fixedly recorded on a recording medium in a processing device which is a target of permission to run the software, for generating attach/detach key information including the device identification information and an attach/detach key-specific encryption key, and recording the generated attach/detach key information on a hardware key which can be attached to and detached from the processing device;

software encryption key generating means for generating a software encryption key for encrypting and decrypting the software, and a software decryption key for decrypting data encrypted by using the software encryption key;

software encrypting means for encrypting the software by using the software encryption key generated by said software encryption key generating means;

software providing means, responsive to input of a software request from the processing device, for transmitting the software encrypted by said software encrypting means to the processing device; and

license issuing means, responsive to a license issue request for the software, for encrypting the software decryption key by using the attach/detach key-specific encryption key, and outputting license information including the encrypted software decryption key.

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13.   (Original)   A processing device for executing software whose execution is restricted by a license, comprising:

a recording medium on which device identification information is fixedly recorded;

hardware key connecting means for reading attach/detach key information including an attach/detach key-specific encryption key and permission target device identification information specifying a device which is a target of permission to run the software, from a hardware key storing the attach/detach key information when the hardware key is attached;

software key decrypting means, responsive to input of license information including an encrypted software decryption key for decrypting the software which has been encrypted, for decrypting the software decryption key by using the attach/detach key-specific encryption key;

identification information determining means for determining sameness of the permission target device identification information included in the hardware key attached to said hardware key connecting means with the device identification information recorded on said recording medium; and

software decrypting means for decrypting the encrypted software by using the software decryption key decrypted by said software key decrypting means if the sameness is confirmed by said identification information determining means.

14. (Original) A software execution management device for managing status of execution of software whose execution is restricted by a license, comprising:

a recording medium on which device identification information is fixedly recorded;

hardware key connecting means for reading attach/detach key information including an attach/detach key-specific encryption key and permission target device identification information specifying a device which is a target of permission to run the software, from a hardware key storing the attach/detach key information when the hardware key is attached;

software key decrypting means, responsive to input of license information including an encrypted software decryption key for decrypting the software which has been encrypted and a number of computers permitted to execute the software simultaneously, for decrypting the software decryption key by using the attach/detach key-specific encryption key; and

decryption key managing means for monitoring computers connected via a network to detect a number of computers executing the software, and transferring the software decryption key decrypted by said software key decrypting means to a number of computers equal to or smaller than the number of computers permitted to execute the software simultaneously.

15.   (Canceled)

16.   (Original)   A license issuing method for issuing a license for execution of software, comprising the steps of:

generating, in response to an attach/detach key information generation request including device identification information fixedly recorded on a recording medium in a processing device which is a target of permission to run the software, attach/detach key information including the device identification information and an attach/detach key-specific encryption key, and recording the generated attach/detach key information on a hardware key which can be attached to and detached from the processing device; and

encrypting, in response to a license issue request for the software, a software decryption key for decrypting the software provided in an encrypted state, by using the attach/detach key-specific encryption key, and outputting license information including the encrypted software decryption key.

17.   (Canceled)

18. (Original) A license issuing program for issuing a license for execution of software, wherein said license issuing program causes a computer to perform the processes of:

generating, in response to an attach/detach key information generation request including device identification information fixedly recorded on a recording medium in a processing device which is a target of permission to run the software, attach/detach key information including the device identification information and an attach/detach key-specific encryption key, and recording the generated attach/detach key information on a hardware key which can be attached to and detached from the processing device; and

encrypting, in response to a license issue request for the software, a software decryption key for decrypting the software provided in an encrypted state, by using the attach/detach key-specific encryption key, and outputting license information including the encrypted software decryption key.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Original) A computer-readable recording medium recording a license issuing program for issuing a license for execution of software, wherein the license issuing program causes the computer to perform the processes of:

generating, in response to an attach/detach key information generation request including device identification information fixedly recorded on a recording medium in a processing device which is a target of permission to run the software, attach/detach key information including the device identification information and an attach/detach key-specific encryption key, and recording the generated attach/detach key information on a hardware key which can be attached to and detached from the processing device; and

encrypting, in response to a license issue request for the software, a software decryption key for decrypting the software provided in an encrypted state, by using the attach/detach key-specific encryption key, and outputting license information including the encrypted software decryption key.